

## What happened to our water?

Don't let our water kill us. Our water should be nice and clean. For the most part it is. However some areas are not. In this essay we will examine the following questions: Where aren't they clean? Why aren't they clean? What can we do to clean them up? "Not in Port Hueneme," you say? Let's take a look.

Our harbor is no different from other harbors and like other harbors suffers from oils, boater debris, waste and street run off. The Kiddie Beach, inside the Harbor is ranked the third worst beach in California. And have you ever walked by Bubbling Springs in Miranda Park? The smell alone could kill you.

So, why are all our waters so dirty? I talked with my Uncle, Dan Perlmutter, an Aquatic Ecologist and professor at West Carolina University. He states that the leading cause of pollution isn't from trash or oil (although both do a lot of damage)--the leading cause of pollution is waste. (Yep, that kind of waste—even human waste.) Boat owners dump human waste. Pet waste is left by dog walkers and is washed into our gutters through Bubbling Springs on its way to the ocean. Geese and ducks gather at Miranda Park while Pelicans and Seagulls gather at the Kiddie beach for free food and leave their droppings in the water. The waters here move too slowly to stay clean. Without waves to flow in and out the fecal matter in all these areas settles into the soil. Over flow from lawn fertilizer adds to the unnatural conditions. Nitrogen and phosphorous settles into

the water and generates too much plant growth. Algae grows till it can't grow any more then dies. The bacteria grows so much it uses up all the oxygen. The water stagnates and begins to smell horribly. Officer Rich of the Harbor Patrol tell us that vehicle oils from street run off create even more problems.

What can we do? Carrie Mattingly, Waste Management Superintendent for the city of Port Hueneme suggests we should pick up our trash, pick up after our pets, don't over water our lawns and don't feed the birds by the water. Officer Rich agrees and reminds us that oil from vehicle oil change should be disposed of properly.

So, in conclusion, we see that the main problem with our polluted water is us. We have caused it and we can stop it. The Harbor, Bubbling Springs and the Kiddie Beach will all take time to heal. Working together we can stop pollution and start being responsible. Pollution free is the way to be.